



Greenlight Your Dreams

Elements of a Viable Spec Script

Protagonist

Your hero or heroine must be IDEALLY SUITED to tackle the story's dilemma. However, this task will be UNIQUELY DIFFICULT for them because of their personality FLAW.

Antagonist

Inherent in the premise is a strong-willed antagonist who has an almost UNSTOPPABLE URGE to complete their goal.

The Rub

What the hero wants, the hero cannot have if the antagonist gets what the antagonist wants.

The Big Question

The audience should always have The Big Question nagging their brain throughout the course of the film. And this question is crystallized at the end of the first act.

DIE HARD - Will John be able to defeat Hans Gruber and his gang before they kill his wife?

SILENCE OF THE LAMBS - Will Clarice be able to stop Buffalo Bill by interacting with the monstrous Hannibal the Cannibal?

KNOCKED UP - Will Ben be able to grow up enough to make it work with the girl of his dreams before she gives birth to his baby?

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Theme

The premise hints at a deeper theme that runs throughout the film. The reader and hence the audience should sense that there is a guiding principle to the work which fuels every scene and every character.

Genre Twist

After the basics, this is the single biggest factor in your ability to sell your screenplay and have an audience enjoy it on the big screen.

You must know your audience and have them in your sights.

Be it a Personal Drama, Romantic Comedy, Action-Adventure, Thriller, Horror or **IDEALLY A HYBRID**, be aware of the particulars of each genre and then shake it up. (Don't stir)

The "Oh Yeah!" Factor

You need the Oh Yeah Factor. Screenwriter Terry Rossio speaks of Mental Real Estate and this is VERY IMPORTANT. Spec scripts capitalize on something the audience is already familiar with and has an urge to learn more about. So give them what they already know... and then tell them something they don't know.

Connect with your Reader

The best way to connect with the Hollywood Gatekeeper is by building a relationship with them. You need to network on the script level most importantly.

So read great scripts and see how they do it!



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